



2D TANK BATTALION QUARTERLY NEWSLETTER

APRIL 2016

Issue 2-2016

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Message from the Commanding Officer

Marines, Sailors, and Families of the Ironhorse,

Another quarter of the year has quickly passed us by. The past three months have been exceptionally busy since the New Year. Our first tank platoon (2nd Platoon, Charlie Company) to deploy to Eastern Europe as part of the Black Sea Rotational Force Combined Arms Company (BSRF-CAC) returned from their historic deployment in late January and was replaced by 1st Platoon Charlie Company. The BSRF-CAC tank platoons have represented 2d Marine Division and the entire Marine Corps in tremendous fashion, participating in coalition exercises in Romania, Bulgaria, and Norway. Our tank platoon from 2nd Platoon, Alpha Company continues its impressive deployment with the 26th Marine Expeditionary Unit. 1st Platoon Alpha Company is now chopped to Battalion Landing Team 1/6 and will soon deploy with the 22nd Marine Expeditionary Unit (MEU). Both MEU tank platoons are highly trained and accomplishing their missions as expected.

Meanwhile back at Camp Lejeune, the Marines and Sailors of the battalion continue increasing our combat readiness both in training and in maintenance. Bravo Company successfully qualified all of their tank crews during semi-annual gunnery qualification. In late February, 2d Tank Battalion conducted an unprecedentedly large exercise known as IRON BLITZ on Camp Lejeune that included 16 units from across the Marine Expeditionary Force and even units from the US Navy and US Air Force. This exercise included a cross-

ing of the New River of all 180+ vehicles and 800+ Marines in the exercise under live artillery fire and simulated chemical attack conditions. For a one week period, the battalion conducted non-live fire and live-fire combined arms maneuver training integrated with LAVs, Amtracks, infantry, and special intelligence assets to include aircraft from the US Air Force. The Battalion performed magnificently in all areas. There is no doubt that your Marines and Sailors are ready to



answer their nation's calling in any mission. Throughout the rest of last quarter, all of the companies have been busy training in the field, taking care of individual annual training requirements, and conducting a one month maintenance stand-down. Last month, the battalion conducted a somber deactivation ceremony in which over 350 people witnessed the deactivation of Charlie Company. Charlie Company's rich combat history will never be forgotten and we all greatly anticipate the day of their reactivation.

The battalion finished this past quarter with a very successful Battalion Talent Show on 1 April. We had numerous Marines/Sailors bravely

take the stage and showcase their talents in poetry, music, singing, and comedy. Special thanks to those individuals that participated and we hope the next one is even bigger. With the summer months quickly approaching, we are anticipating a mass turnover of key personnel in the Battalion. We have already bid farewell to our Operations Chief- Master Gunnery Sergeant Sanchez and his wife (and Command Team Advisor) Ester. We will soon bid farewell to our Bn Sergeant Major (SgtMaj Burkhardt) and his wife (and Command Team Advisor) Kandi as well as many others. But with these sad farewells, we will warmly welcome the many Marines/Sailors and their families that replace them.

I hope your Marine/Sailor is keeping you informed of all the training events and family readiness activities we have coming up later this year. Please feel free to contact our Family

Readiness Officer (FRO) - Noreen Towle for any questions about our Family Readiness Program and how we can support you or if you're interested in volunteering your time and talent to support the battalion. She can be reached at her desk number 910-451-6343, by cell 910-372-2741, and at noreen.towle@usmc.mil.

Semper Fidelis,

LtCol Robert J. Bodisch
Commanding Officer
2d Tank Battalion, 2d Marine Division

HEADQUARTERS AND SERVICE COMPANY

Family and friends of Headquarters and Service Company:

It is with a humble heart that I write to you today as the new Company Commander for the impressive group of Marines and Sailors that comprise Headquarters and Service Company. I have had the fortunate opportunity to watch this group develop as a cohesive team over the past couple of years and am very excited to be a part of it.

Throughout this winter the entire battalion has been working hard to prepare for Exercise IRON BLITZ, 2d Tank Battalion's winter field exercise. This event pushed the Battalion to its limits while validating that it can effectively and efficiently conduct its mission. This team played a critical role ensuring the tank companies, artillery batteries, reconnaissance platoons and infantry all had the food, fuel and ammo they needed to remain lethal. I know this did not come without a cost. Countless hours were dedicated to preparing equipment and conducting field training in the months leading up to the event; not to mention time away during the exercise. When it was all said and done, your Marines and Sailors represented this Battalion incredibly well.

As with any event, the exercise isn't over until all of our gear and equipment is cleaned up, repaired, and prepared for the next event; and this is no easy task. For this, we dedicated the entire month of March toward a

maintenance stand-down.

Throughout this time, our mechanics have been turning wrenches, busting rust, and replacing parts all in an effort to ensure we are fully ready at a moment's notice. I have been impressed at the effort our men and women have put forth during what can become pretty arduous work. It speaks volumes toward the dedication and pride they take in their equipment and their work.

The effort they put forth during the maintenance stand-down was no more evident than during the Battalion Commander's vehicle inspection at the end of



March. The trucks, tanks, recovery vehicles, personal weapons, radios, and especially the Marines looked sharp. It is especially noteworthy that we were able to showcase our readiness to the Commanding General of 2nd Marine Division during this inspection. Following the inspection, Major General Beaudreault personally recognized Lance Corporal Daniel Cook from the Motor Transportation Platoon for a job well done. He was particularly impressed with the cleanliness and maintenance of this young Marine's truck and personal weapon. We couldn't be more

proud of him and his commitment to excellence.

As we look forward to the next few months there are several unique training events scheduled for the company. In April, we have the opportunity to get back to our amphibious roots during a two-day long exercise aboard the USS BATAAN. During this event, a portion of the company will practice loading our trucks and recovery vehicles on to the Navy's LCAC (Landing Craft Air Cushioned); the hovercraft "taxi" that ferry's our Marines from ship to shore. Once loaded, they will head out to sea to board the USS

BATAAN for an overnight stay on one of the many variants of Amphibious Ships the Navy employs. We will return back to the beach the next day. Immediately following this event we will conduct Machine Gun Training with our designated machine gun teams. Each team will spend about three days at the range honing

their skills while firing at targets from a truck mounted machine gun. This should be great training and a great time for all who participate.

May 16 – 20 the entire company will head to the field for a week to ensure we retain our fighting skills and are fully prepared for the next battalion exercise in July. During this event we will be conducting training day and night, throwing hand grenades and firing some AT-4 rockets. These events are typically the favorites for the Marines.

In closing, I must say that I

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stand in awe at the loyalty, enthusiasm, and commitment to the defense of this great nation demonstrated by your Marines and Sailors, especially during such a tumultuous time in the world.

With that, I would be remiss not to thank all of you for the love and support you provide to the Marine-Family team, we would not be as ready as we are today, so thank you.

Semper Fidelis,

Captain Daniel Whitt
H & S Company Commander
2d Tank Battalion
2d Marine Division

ALPHA COMPANY

The past three months have been absolutely packed with events as I am sure you are all well aware. First, let me thank each of you for supporting your Marine and helping Alpha continue to roll on! Now, let me introduce myself. My name is 1st Lt Kenton Comstock and I have been a part of Alpha Company since July of last year, taking command of the company this past January.

Since the New Year, Alpha has been on the go. We started with a company field exercise here at Camp Lejeune. The Marines used this time to become familiar with some of the new crews and begin our preparation for the battalion's field exercise in February. We also trained the company in the proper procedures to survive a chemical attack and how to wash down the tanks after an attack.

In February, the company participated in 2d Tank Battalion's Marine Corps Combat Readiness Evaluation (MCCRE). This event really tested the company, and your Marines excelled yet again. During this MCCRE, the company conducted offensive and defensive operations, a river crossing, fought through another simulated chemical weapon attack and conducted live fire training with the platoons. The Marines put a lot of long hours in during this evolution, and the weather finally played nice while Alpha was in the field!

After the MCCRE, the company

then conducted amphibious operations at Onslow Beach. The Marines utilized Landing Craft Air Cushions (LCACs) to move the tanks aboard the USS Carter Hall overnight before returning home. It was a great opportunity for the Marines who will soon become part of a Marine Expeditionary Unit (MEU) to see a snapshot of what life looks like on an amphibious ship.

Lastly, the company conducted another field exercise at Camp Lejeune, giving the company time to focus on the fundamentals at the crew and platoon level. The Marines were put to the test as we also put a large focus on night operations. Your Marines were awake through all hours of the night conducting patrols, establishing listening posts and conducting attacks on enemy positions.

Looking ahead, the company will spend the month of April focusing on maintenance of the tanks. However, we do have some exciting things happening this month.

One of the crews currently deployed aboard a MEU will return to take part in a service wide gun-

nery competition known as the Sullivan Cup. We wish them the best of luck! In May, the Marines will be working hard to prepare for the company's semi-annual gunnery taking place in June. With everything going on, we also need to focus on the families and personnel readiness. There are countless workshops, community relations events and a beach bash all coming up for the entire 2d Tank Battalion family. Check the Facebook page often for updates on everything going on. As always, thank you for your continued support!

Roll on Alpha!

1st Lt Kenton Comstock
Alpha Company Commander
2d Tank Battalion
2d Marine Division



BRAVO COMPANY

BRAVO COMPANY MARINES, SAILORS, FAMILIES AND FRIENDS:

The second quarter of the fiscal year has been an extremely busy one for the Marines and sailors of Company B. As many of you are aware, your loved one was away most of January into early February executing semi-annual tank gunnery. Due to the logistical constraints to fire tank main gun aboard Camp Lejeune it requires the company to reside on the tank range for approximately a month's time in order to facilitate the firing of all of the pre-qualification and qualification gunnery tables (series of engagements). The Marines of the company performed extremely well, with every crew shooting Q1, or qualifying with their crew on the first attempt. With 14 crews following, this is an outstanding accomplishment and truly demonstrates the dedication of your Marine to their profession at arms.

Following gunnery Bravo Company participated in Operation IRON BLITZ. This was a battalion level field exercise serving as a Marine Corps Combat Readiness Evaluation (MCCRE) for the Iron Horse. The week long exercise incorporated over 16 units from II MEF as well as elements from the U.S. Navy and the Air Force. As expected, the Marines and sailors of the company executed extremely well. Special credit needs to be given to Sergeants Woods and Chounthala who led their respective platoons as the Platoon Commander during the first 72 hours of operations. The event culminated with platoon level live fire aboard range SR-10. Overall it was a great training exercise with a lot of lessons learned for the company.

The upcoming quarter will



continue to be a busy one for the company. As most of you know your Marine or sailor will be heading to the Marine Corps Air Ground Combat Center 29 Palms, CA at the end of April for a month long exercise. The Integrated Training Exercise (ITX) is a service level exercise and the company will be supporting 2d Marine Regiment as well as 3rd Battalion, 2d Marines, and 2d Battalion, 8th Marines during the exercise. Your Marine should have all the information regarding tentative departure and return dates as well as how to contact them in an emergency. If you are lacking this information please don't hesitate to reach out.

The battalion will be continuing its relationship seminars during the month of April. These are great opportunities for couples, married or unmarried, old or new, to get together and help learn skills and techniques for healthier relationships. Again, your Marine or sailor has all of the information if you are looking to attend, I highly recommend it!

Some future dates to keep in mind:

Semi Annual Tank Gunnery
14 April – 19 April

Healthy Relationship Seminar
18 – 19 April

Integrated Training Exercise
20 April - 6 June

Company B
Tanker of the Quarter:

The Tanker of the Quarter is Corporal Luis Fernandez. Cpl Fernandez hails from Bronx, New York. While attending the Corporal's Course, Cpl Fernandez was voted by his peers to receive the "Gung Ho" Award for his enthusiasm and ability to bring folks together as a team.

Semper Tanks,

Captain Kevin Newport
Bravo Company Commander
2d Tank Battalion
2d Marine Division

CHARLIE COMPANY

2D TANK BATTALION DEACTIVATES CHARLIE COMPANY

In December of 1941, Company C, 2d Tank Battalion, 2d Marine Division was established by the United States Marine Corps as the nation began to mobilize for World War II. Originally outfitted with M3A1 "Stuart" light tanks, the company first deployed to Iceland, providing a northern guard to the European front. When the Marine Corps shifted its focus to the Pacific front, the company first saw combat in August 1942 on the island of Tanambogo during the Guadalcanal Campaign. Following lessons learned during that battle, Company C was upgraded with the M4A2 "Sherman" medium tanks in 1943 in preparation for additional Pacific island seizure operations.

The campaign to seize the Gilbert Islands began in November 1943, and Company C participated in the heaviest fighting of the amphibious assault on Betio Island, Tarawa Atoll. The combined arms power that Company C brought to the 2d Marine Division landing force proved invaluable during the battle, and has been the model for successful tank-infantry integration in the Marine Corps ever since. After the assault on Tarawa, Company C participated in combat actions on Saipan, Tinian, Ie Shima, and Okinawa. After the war's end, the company performed occupation security duties in Japan with the rest of the 2d Tank Battalion until relocation to Camp Lejeune, NC in 1946. During the 1950s, Company C often trained in large scale fleet landing exercises deploying to Vieques, Puerto Rico and further honing the Marine Corps' amphibious warfare doctrine and techniques. As tensions rose during the Cold War, Marine tanks were chosen to secure and defend American interests at home and abroad. During the 1960s, platoons from Company C were routinely deployed to Guantanamo Bay, Cuba, as an integral part of the base's defenses..

During the Vietnam War, Company C

and the rest of 2d Tank Battalion provided training and combat replacement personnel for the 1st and 3rd Tank Battalions who were forward deployed to Southeast Asia in combat. When the war in Vietnam ended in 1975, 2d Tank Battalion transitioned its focus to NATO security operations. In 1978, Company C deployed to West Germany in support of NATO exercise Bold Guard, refining mobilization procedures and combat integration with joint forces and European allies. In the 1970s and 80s, and Company C platoons also routinely participated in Marine Amphibious Unit deployments. In 1989, the company deployed to Camp Fuji, Japan in support of the



Unit Deployment Program.

Two years later, after Iraq invaded Kuwait, Company C was again called upon for combat operations, this time in support of Operation Desert Storm/Desert Shield. On 3 January 1991, the company arrived in Al Jubayl, Saudi Arabia attached to the 8th Marine Regiment and was key to the overwhelming combat power that forced the Iraqi Army to retreat out of Kuwait and restore international borders. Victory came swift for Company C and by May 1991 the tanks and men of the company were back in North Carolina. Throughout the 90s, Company C was in a steady rotation of Marine Expeditionary Unit deployments, Combined Arms Exercise training, and international exercises. In 1998 the company deployed to Nova Scotia, Cana-

da and in 2000 the company deployed to Greece for allied training exercises. After the events on 9/11, Company C was ready to "win when called upon" and within months a platoon from the company was deployed to Pakistan in support of Operation Swift Freedom and Operation Enduring Freedom. In 2002, with a platoon in Pakistan, the company also deployed to Zargosa, Spain in support of additional multinational training.

On 30 June 2003, Company C returned to the sands of the Middle East and arrived in Kuwait in preparation for Operation Iraqi Freedom. As a key player in "the opening gambit," the combined arms firepower and speed of the tanks of Company C were instrumental in pushing back Iraqi forces and shaping the battlefield for success. In 2004, the Marines and tanks of Company C deployed once more to Iraq in support of OIF. While attached to RCT-1 they participated in the "Battle of Fallujah," the largest urban battle in the Corp's history. The company deployed to Iraq once again in 2006 in support of OIF. After the completion of this deployment, Company C platoons participated in

multiple MEU deployments and Mojave Viper training exercises until 2011, when they deployed for combat as a company once again. In 2011, Company C was attached to the 2d Combat Engineer Battalion and deployed to Afghanistan in support of OEF. Returning from Afghanistan, the company spent the next several years in rotations on MEU deployments, Integrated Training Exercises, and deployments for training to Fort Knox, KY and Fort Pickett, VA. In October 2015, 1st Platoon, Company C departed for Bulgaria. This final deployment was a historic event for the Marine Corps, the first time Marine armor deployed to an Eastern-Bloc country since the end of the Cold War, and a fitting finalé for one of 2d Tank Battalion's most decorated and accomplished companies.

TELLING OUR STORIES

Telling our stories is an essential part of being human. Not only does telling our story let others know who we are, but it helps ourselves to know who we are as well. Without our stories and not really knowing where we come from makes it nearly impossible to truly know where we are, let alone where we're going.

This Saturday (9 April), members of 2d Tank Battalion will have the opportunity to tell an important part of the Marine Corps story by participating in the 75th Anniversary of the commissioning of the Battleship North Carolina in Wilmington. These volunteers will not only receive expert training in what it was like to be Marine deployed on a battleship during World War II, but they will also have an opportunity to share their story with the public. All day Saturday, our Marines will be demonstrating how their older brothers from World War II lived and fought on the Battleship North Carolina. These demonstrations are simply a small part of a larger living history program that will include Sailors from the Division doing the same thing, but from the Navy's perspective.

Sharing our stories is important in our relationships as well. On April 18th and 19th, 2d Tank Battalion will be hosting a Foundations of Marriage class as part of the Relationship Enrichment Program. This two-day class is intended for couples who are engaged to be married or who have been married for less than two years. If you're interested in attending this class, please contact my office at 910-451-2424/6344 or jason.constantine@usmc.mil.

On April 29th, 2d Tank Battalion will continue with the monthly Healthy Relationships Workshops by offering a 2 ½ hour class, Four Lenses. Four Lenses looks at peoples' personalities and provides tips and techniques customized to specific personality types in order to facilitate deeper and healthier relationships. Again, if you're interested in this workshop, please contact my office.

Whether you're interacting with the public or your loved ones, keep sharing your story and nurture those relationships that you value the most.

May God Bless,

LCDR Jason Constantine
Battalion Chaplain
2d Tank Battalion, 2d Marine Division



2D TANK BATTALION FAMILY READINESS PROGRAM

Article by: Noreen Towle

The 2d Tank Battalion Unit and Personal Family Readiness Program (UPFRP) is a robust program which actively promotes the mission readiness of unit Marines and Sailors. The Corps most valuable resource is the individual Marine and their family which translates to the proactive participation with the tenets of the program: official communication, readiness and deployment support, volunteer management, and facilitated community building events. Events are successfully planned, coordinated and executed with the intent to not only provide an environment to increase unit morale and cohesion but to simultaneously provide an environment for training and educating in order to proactively create a foundational basis that would allow physical, mental and

spiritual strengthening to enhance combat and operational readiness.

Core to the success of the program is volunteer involvement. 2d Tank Battalion has a variety of volunteers who help support our unit by working closely in support of service members and their families, providing resources, referrals, planning, coordinating and executing events, and participating in numerous community relations programs. Being involved not only benefits our Marines, Sailors and their family members, it also fosters and nurtures a positive, proactive community.

Most recent, 2d tank Battalion held a "Show Us What You

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Got" talent show and chili cook off. This event was an open talent show to all Marines and Sailors of the unit. A varied talent lineup participated with acts such as Spoken Word, instrumental and lyrical performances, break dancing, and comedian acts. Sgt Roybal' s band took first place, LCpl McKenzie took second for performing Spoken Word, and LCpl Keegan took 3rd place for his "What are the Odds" Comedy Tour. If you are interested in seeing a YouTube video of our talent show then please visit <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=YQYRJTLRxAl>

Simultaneously, we held a Chili Cook Off where the majority of the entrants provided an excellent assortment of flavorful chili however one unnamed Corpsman entered his ghost pepper chili into the mix and left all tasters with what felt like a fiery inferno in their mouths.

First place went to Sgt Madson, second place to SSgt Purviance, and third place to 1stSgt Johnson.



2D TANK BATTALION SINGLE MARINE PROGRAM

Article by: LCpl Derrick McKenzie



Our very own Single Marine Officer Lance Corporal McKenzie, along with four other Marine Corps and Navy personnel from Camp Lejeune were a part of the 2016 Charlotte Hornets Military Cares volunteer event hosted in Charlotte. The event sponsors were Bank of America Family Dollar. This volunteer event acknowledged and welcomed our nations very own Marine Corps, U.S. Army, U.S. Navy and U.S. Air force who all together packed more than 10,000 care kits that will be distributed to U.S. military troops overseas through the help of the military support group Operation Gratitude. Thank you for your selflessness. Great way to set the example and represent 2d Tank Battalion!

PROMOTIONS

February

SSgt Fischer, A.A.
Sgt Guerrero, R.
Cpl Torressantiago, J.J.
Cpl Roberts, A.C.
Cpl Ellison III, J.L.
Cpl Bible, B.C.
LCpl Mosely A.J.
LCpl Grenier, Z.J.
LCpl Flournoy, J.P.

March

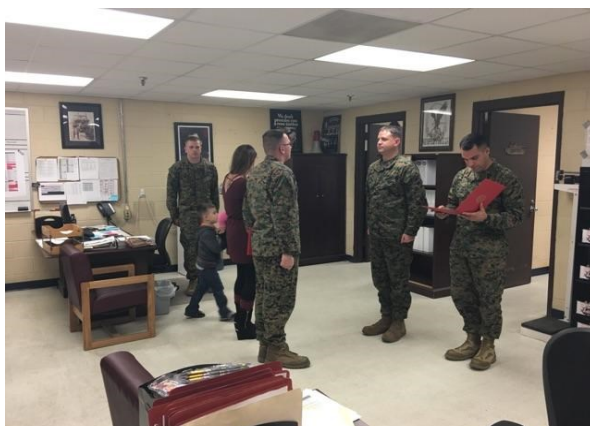
Cpl Johnson, J.J. (meritorious)
Cpl Crawford, S.R. (meritorious)
Cpl Donelson, B.L. (meritorious)
Sgt Wynn, B.M.
Sgt Allen, C.W.
Sgt Alegria Jr., J.M.
Cpl Renuart, A.T.
Cpl Ramos, C.E.
Cpl Huerta, Z.J.
Cpl Chadbourne, C.B.
Cpl Bergman, B.W.
LCpl Monahan, T.G.

April

LCpl Curran, Christopher J.
LCpl Adams, Jordan M.
LCpl Campbell, Samuel D.
LCpl Martinez, Irving X.
LCpl Robinson, Keano A.
LCpl Skelton, James T.
LCpl Tarr, Trae J.
Cpl Keegan, Sean T.
Cpl Porath, Joshua A.
Sgt Cassidy, Ronald P.
Sgt Desbrough, Brandon R.
Sgt Gregalunas, Ryan J



RE- ENLISTMENTS



Cpl Dlugolecki, Daniel K
Sgt Goessl, Jonathon M
Cpl Gregalunas, Ryan J
Sgt RolonRivera, Pedro E
LCpl Torressantiago, Justin J
Cpl Wynn, Brandon M
Sgt Jones, Joshua A
SSgt Purviance, Bobby G
Sgt Spalek, Sebastian J

RETIREMENTS

The Watch

For years this Marine has stood the watch. While many of us lay about our bunks at night, this Marine stood watch. While others of us were attending schools, this Marine stood the watch. As our families watched the storm clouds of war brewing on the horizons of history, he stood the watch. This Marine looked ashore and saw his family often needing guidance, but he knew that he must stay because he had the watch.

For years he stood watch so that our fellow countrymen could sleep soundly, in safety, knowing that this Marine would stand the watch. Today we are here to say ~ the watch stands relieved. Relieved by those you have led, guided and trained. Marine, you stand relieved. We have the watch.

Fair winds and following seas Staff Sergeant John D. Epps



SAILOR OF THE QUARTER

Article by: LCPO Jodie Coffin, Noreen Towle and Erin Ward

Sailor of the Quarter (SOQ) is an extremely honorable recognition, awarded to the “best of the best” as selected among all the Sailors. The SOQ is recognized for their superior performance, outstanding achievements, exemplary personal conduct, military bearing and demonstrated initiative in performance. Additionally, SOQ candidates are judged for their work performance, volunteer efforts, collateral duties, physical fitness scores, and their ability to speak on a board with six Chief Petty Officers. The nomination process is rigorous, making the SOQ recognition a tremendous accomplishment. HM2 Jordan Ilbrink was recognized as the frontrunner in his division and was nominated by his Chief to be reviewed by the SOQ board. HM2 Ilbrink was awarded the Junior Sailor of the Quarter for 2d Marine Division, 1st QTR 2016.

HM2 Ilbrink is 26 years old, and originally from South Carolina. He attended Camden Military High School and received a college scholarship. He did not take the scholarship, which greatly upset his family, but ultimately led to his joining of the United States Navy. He originally wanted to become a Navy Seal but was dropped from the program and picked up Explosive Ordnance Disposal (EOD). During EOD training, Ilbrink met the brother of his soon to be wife. While going through the pipeline for EOD, Ilbrink decided he did not want to continue on with this program and became a Corpsman instead.

HM2 Ilbrink has served at the Naval Health Clinic in Charleston South Carolina, on an Individual Augment (IA), and at the 2d Tank Battalion Aid Station. While on his

IA billet, HM2 Ilbrink deployed to Djibouti, Somalia and Ethiopia. While in Ethiopia, HM2 Ilbrink helped to build a school for the locals. He learned to be grateful that he was an American because of the abundance that is in this

HM2 Ilbrink originally planned to only enlist in the Navy for four years but decided to become career Navy due to the mentorship and encouragement of his leadership.

country. The Ethiopians lived out of tin cans and would dig large ditches to use as toilets which were filled with cement once they were full.

HM2 Ilbrink originally planned to only enlist in the Navy for four years but decided to become career Navy due to the mentorship and encouragement of his leadership. Ilbrink states that his senior leader, HM1 Bourland, inspired his junior Sailors to come to work for him each day. He showed interest and care in the details of the lives of the Sailors who worked for him, shared his knowledge gained through multiple deployments and aided his Sailors in becoming the best they could be. It is this kind of leader that HM2 Ilbrink has modeled himself after. His advice for new sailors is that the military is what you make of it. You can complain and be disgruntled about your job or you can give 100% and make it a great experience.

If you can't find HM2 Ilbrink working at the CP, he is probably spending quality time with his wife or in the gym. He loves running, and completing Jim Stephani workouts. Ilbrink suggests the best workout music is rap and hip hop. Ilbrink hopes to retire in Indiana, where his wife is originally from.

HM2 Ilbrink's Lead Chief Petty Officer, Jodie Coffin, remarks that “HM2's performance had placed him head and shoulders over his peers within the Division and being selected says even more. I am

proud to say that HM2 is my Sailor here at Tank Battalion. Next month, he will be leaving Division and heading to Chicago to the Navy Recruit Training Command to become a Recruit Division Commander (RDC). His integrity, hard work, dedication and drive will make him a successful Sailor. I have no doubt that he will be a great role model for the new Sailors joining the Navy. I know that the days will be long, he will be challenged and even sought out for advice, but in the end he will persevere. The task ahead is not an easy one, but it will be worth it. Stay strong, charge hard and don't let them forget where you came from!”



HM2 (FMF/EXW) Jordan Ilbrink

SEEING THE WHOLE PICTURE

Article by: Noreen Towle and Erin Ward

Marines make a tangible impact on the world each day. They are honored as “elite warriors who courageously and honorably face down the threats of our time.” This Marine Corps mystique holds a strong attraction for many American youth. While some enter into the Marine Corps to simply find a way out from the environment they grew up in, there are those who specifically seek to be a part of a system that holds honor, courage, and commitment as their corps values.

Born in East Alton, Illinois, Cpl Anthony Silkwood came from a

in his job and has received multiple high accolades from his chain of command and from the Division Commanding General. Because of Cpl Silkwood’s abilities and work ethic, his leadership has placed him in roles that are not normally filled by Corporals. Cpl Silkwood has filled in as Platoon Sergeant, normally performed by a Gunnery Sergeant, for extended periods of time. Silkwood notes that being in the role of Platoon Sergeant has opened up his ability to perceive the “whole picture.” Often times, at the junior levels you do not know why you are tasked with certain jobs and

He takes pride in his job and has received multiple high accolades from his chain of command and from the Division Commanding General.

close knit family. His father was the city Mayor which meant that it was nearly impossible for him to get into trouble because everyone would tell his father. Cpl Silkwood had completed two semesters of college before deciding that the challenges the Marine Corps would bring was a good fit with his personality.

Cpl Silkwood deployed with the 24th Marine Expeditionary Unit (MEU) as a Tank Gunner to the Middle East in 2015. Most notable to the deployment was when they were on standby for a potential evacuation off the coast of Yemen, participated in security training with grunt forces in Oman and learning that not all Muslim people in the Middle East were “bad” but in fact detested the terrorists as Westerners do. The local people fed the military from the MEU and would have “given them the shirt off their back.”

Cpl Silkwood enjoys being a Tanker because he is a part of an elite ground force. He takes pride

in his job and has received multiple high accolades from his chain of command and from the Division Commanding General. Because of Cpl Silkwood’s abilities and work ethic, his leadership has placed him in roles that are not normally filled by Corporals. Cpl Silkwood has filled in as Platoon Sergeant, normally performed by a Gunnery Sergeant, for extended periods of time. Silkwood notes that being in the role of Platoon Sergeant has opened up his ability to perceive the “whole picture.” Often times, at the junior levels you do not know why you are tasked with certain jobs and

complain about having to perform those jobs. When you allow yourself to view the greater picture, you understand that each individual task holds meaning and has to be done for the purpose of the mission. Being in this leadership role has led to Cpl Silkwood’s personal and professional growth. He states that he has become a better Tank Commander and Section Leader because of it and shows gratitude to his leadership for seeing the potential in him to fill these roles.

His love for Baseball comes in a close second to his love for being a tanker. Silkwood has played baseball his whole life, and also plays on the 2d Tanks battalion softball team. His team excelled and won the championship last year. Recently, Cpl Silkwood has been recognized for saving a fellow Marine from committing suicide. Cpl Silkwood has encountered multiple people in his life who have either committed or tried to commit suicide. It has left

an indelible mark on him which has led to a desire to become involved in Suicide Prevention so that he can help people understand that even though they are experiencing heady life stressors, what they are going through is but a small fraction of their entire lives. Silkwood intends to aid people in learning coping techniques to move through these stressors, past the point of difficulty they are experiencing in this moment and open up to the potential that will be a part of their entire life.

Advice Cpl Silkwood leaves fellow Marines is to maintain the “squared away” boot camp mentality and for leadership to always be cognizant of their Marines. Allowing junior Marines to grow and advance contributes not only to the wellness of the individual but the wellness of the Marine Corps as a whole.



SPOUSE'S CORNER

SHATTERING THE GLASS CEILING FOR WOMEN IN HIGHER EDUCATION

Article by: Olivia McLendon



I grew up in northwestern New Mexico. A place in the desert where the air is dry and the sand is as fine as dust. In my hometown, college danced along the line of luxury. A small fraction of our graduating class left is for college, while others found jobs or enlisted in the military.

For me, I chose to attend the University of New Mexico (UNM) in Albuquerque where my sister was already a second year pharmacy student. As I began my first semester, I met women in the medical, law, engineering and business fields. This led me to wonder why, with this fast growing world, is there still a disparity for women in higher education? What is preventing us from education post high school?

A year ago, I worked for a department at UNM that specialized in recruitment for American Indian students into health science degrees. I met a diverse group of students that I helped foster their development from planning out a curriculum as a high school junior to researching the workforce after graduate school. During events we hosted, I would visit with the graduate students and ask them about their day. Some were mothers living away from home while their children were being raised by their families. Others had moved with theirs and sought ways to balance family and school. Their answers were all the same, they were completely exhausted from performing rotations at the hospital or gaining extra practice in the cadav-

er lab. A place where the formaldehyde caught your nose when you barely stepped foot inside the building lobby.

One day, I was called to deliver office supplies to our student center. Anytime I would visit the center there would either be the clicking of keyboards or someone snoring on the couch. Yes, we had a couch and an overnight key for the building as well.

But on one particular day my friend was seated at one of the tables with her laptop. Her book bag would be on the floor with an iPad nestled in papers upon papers of notes that managed to peek out. As if it was yesterday, I remember her telling me about her little sister's class project. It was an activity for middle school students to dress up as their heroes. She attended the activity dressed as her big sister with a stethoscope looped around her shoulder with a white coat on.

For a middle school student to step outside the norm was a perfect epitome for influencing not only our youth, but our young women. We shouldn't encourage them to fall into gender specific professions but instead influence them to achieve a higher education and not the bare minimum.

Because like her sister, a graduate student, it was difficult for them consid-

ering they focused a great deal of their time on their studies. With exams once or three times a week with pop quizzes and lab practicals, this left little to no room for any leisure time.

When my sister was a first year I was a senior in high school and my parents and I would visit her on weekends. She would always carry around a stack of index cards and packets of handwritten notes that were completely filled with writings. Her time was limited and she accompanied us for short periods while the rest of the time she spent studying. Her desk would be covered with binders of papers, highlighters and pens were scattered around the room. Heaps of textbooks with torn post-its could pass for her floor tiles. She actually had a white board installed with words like "bradycardia and bronchospasm" scribbled on them. As I started college, she

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took me to galas and lectures the university hosted. I met women studying to become doctors in medicine and pharmacy. They moved from different parts

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of the nation to attend college but were brought back to the southwest for graduate school.

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A few years ago, I was working with a flu shot clinic. We partnered with the university's College of Pharmacy and in return they lent their professors and students to help administer flu vaccinations. I remember specifically an elderly woman had filled out the paperwork and was next in line to receive a flu shot. A pharmacy student, who was a young woman, was preparing the flu vaccine as the elderly woman asked, "Are you a nurse?". We are so easy to assume that a woman working in a healthcare facility are nurses, technicians or receptionists.

From personal experience I've met college advisors who simply tell their students that they will end up failing. That their dreams of becoming a neonatal surgeon or a criminal lawyer will never happen. There will be people who will try to prevent you from achieving your goal by placing obstacles in your path. Though, seeking a college education is a difficult task in itself, we must not be easily discouraged.

My sister graduated from the UNM College of Pharmacy in 2014 and is a registered pharmacist in the state of New Mexico. In addition, this past fall my eldest sister began her first year with the same alma mater. While I, the outlier, graduated this past summer with a Bachelor of Arts Degree in English and Philosophy. But don't fret, I only have two sisters, both unbelievably skilled in all things math and science.

So if you're wondering what to do, I will leave you with this. From the words of a former college student, There is no

such thing as too much research. Plant yourself in front of the computer and research what you want to do, how to get there and who will help you. Find professionals in your community to shadow, make them your mentor so they will help you understand the profession and gain quality experience. Remember to have faith in your soul and motivation in your heart.

If you are interested in submitting an article for the spouse's corner please submit it to noreen.towle@usmc.mil.

WHO AM I?

Originally from the suburbs of Chicago, Illinois, I was a rambunctious energetic, destructive, and funny kid who was seen as the class clown. My mother was an Irish singer. One day during lunch in third grade, I randomly asked a teacher if I could stand up on the table and sing "Grandma Got Ran Over by a Reindeer." After doing so, all the children cheered and clapped.

Today, I am "just grown up" meaning I am pretty much the same. I consider myself a man of God and a family man who enjoys spending time with his wife and four children. I dirt bike and play music, mostly acoustics. I enjoy making up songs on my acoustic guitar or singing hymns with my children.

Can you guess Who I Am? Sending your guesses to the FRO: Noreen.towle@usmc.mil. The first correct guess will win a \$5 gift card. The Answer to last quarters Who Am I is Lt Hohmeier.



LOOK TO THE FUTURE

Upcoming 2d Tank Battalion Events

APRIL

18-19 Apr: "Before I Do" Workshop
 22 Apr: SMP Day of Service
 27 Apr: SgtMaj Relief and Appointment Ceremony
 29 Apr: Healthy Relationships Workshop: 4 Lenses

MAY

7 May: Ace In the Hole Foundation Beach Run
 TBD: Healthy Relationships Workshop
 1630 27 May - 0730 01 Jun Memorial Day 96

JUNE/JULY

TBD: Healthy Relationships Workshop
 22 Jun: Change of Command Ceremony
 1630 30 Jun - 0730 05 Jul Independence Day 96
 7 Jul: 2d Tank Battalion Beach Bash and Car Show

2D TANK BATTALION PARTICIPATES IN THE SEMPER FI BEAT THE BRIDGE FUN RUN

On April 9, 2016, Marines and family members from 2d Tank Battalion participated in the Semper Fi Fund Beat the Bridge 10k/5k/1 Mile Fun Run. The race started and finished at New Bridge Middle School and wound through the streets of Jacksonville, along River Walk Park and the waterfront. Of note, Cpl Joshua Porath had a 10k chip time of 41:56, WO Luis Martinez-Bido had a 10k chip time of 42:01, and 1stSgt Jonas Johnson had a 10k run time of 43:46.



75th Commissioning Anniversary of the Battleship USS North Carolina

On the Community Relations front on 9 April 2016 in Wilmington, NC, our Chaplain and over 21 Marines and Sailors volunteered to participate in the 75th Anniversary of the battleship USS North Carolina by donning period uniforms and providing the public with a demonstration of ship-board roles of sea-going Marines and Sailors of WWII.

